

LTS GT 2GTHR! S-V

ENSURING EQUALITY FOR ALL



DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS AWARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION and Disability Employment Awareness Committee are seeking nominations for the Business Recognition Awards given to businesses that excel in the employment of people with disabilities in Bloomington. Nominations are due **September 14, 2009**. For more information, visit our website at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Disability Employment.

SINCE 1968, the Bloomington Human Rights Commission has advised the City Council on human rights issues. The nine-member commission also has recognized community members for their outstanding efforts in the area of human rights through the Omar Bonderud Human Rights Award and the Disability Employment and Awareness Month Business Recognition Awards.

Human rights affect the happiness, health and prosperity of a community. Safeguarding these rights is important. Human Services provides staff leadership to the City Council-appointed Human Rights Commission. Together, we ensure that all Bloomington citizens have equal opportunities and equal rights.

OMAR BONDERUD AWARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

THE BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS Commission is seeking nominations for the Omar Bonderud Human Rights Award. This award is presented to an organization or individual who has made a significant contribution toward ensuring the human rights of people in Bloomington. Human rights areas for consideration may include equal opportunity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and any other service that affects the social well-being of the community. The nominee must live or work in Bloomington and meet other established criteria. Nominations are due **September 11, 2009**. Nomination forms are available by calling 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740 or by visiting the City's website, keywords: Omar Bonderud.



2006 Award recipient Larry Yazzie, fancy dancer.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT



THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) was enacted to provide broad anti-discrimination protection for all persons with physical and mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities. The Act covers employment, public services, public accommodations and services operated by private entities, and telecommunication relay services.

The City has staff with ADA training that can provide assistance, guidance and follow-up in reference to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Call *Ask the City* if:

- You believe you have been discriminated against because of a disability.
- You are building or renovating a publicly used building and want to make sure ADA guidelines for accessibility are met.
- You are a concerned citizen who believes a public or private entity is not accessible.

The City of Bloomington has made a commitment to serve individuals with disabilities and to make sure every individual has access to all services, public and private.

REPORTING A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

THE BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION aids and advises the City Council in ensuring all citizens have equal opportunity in employment, housing, public accommodations, public services and education, and other affairs. The commission sponsors a number of educational forums throughout the year and also provides mediation for individuals who feel they have been discriminated against as it relates to Human Rights laws.

For more information or to make a complaint, contact the Human Rights Commission at 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740.



(^_^) BSCO - XLNT XCHANG! BLOOMINGTON SISTER CITY ORGANIZATION (BSCO)

A "TASTE" OF HOSPITALITY HOTEL RECEIVES BSCO STAR SUPPORTER AWARD

THE HILTON MINNEAPOLIS/BLOOMINGTON was recently awarded the 2009 Star Supporter Award from the BSCO at its annual fundraiser "Taste of Japan."

According to Human Services Manager Lorinda Pearson, the hotel was instrumental in providing an outstanding welcome and first impression of Bloomington for Izumi City's Mayoral delegation visit in 2008.

"The Hilton provided a Japanese breakfast each morning, transportation to and from local activities and held a Chamber of Commerce lunch in honor of the Izumi City delegates," Pearson said. "General Manager Jim Waldvogel and his staff went above and beyond to provide a memorable experience."

For more information about Taste of Japan or becoming a BSCO corporate sponsor, call 952-563-8713 or visit www.bloomington-izumi.org.



CULTURAL EXCHANGES SISTER CITY PROGRAM FACILITATES GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS

SINCE 1993, when Bloomington began a Sister City relationship with Izumi City, Japan, the Bloomington Sister City Organization (BSCO) has promoted international understanding through exchanges of people, information and ideas. Its goals are to establish friendships, build understanding and develop strong relationships. Community involvement is essential to the program's success.

Resident Dan Royer has been volunteering for BSCO since 2005, when he and his wife Denise hosted Satomi Fujiwara, an exchange student visiting through the BSCO high school exchange program. *See photo above.* Royer enjoyed the hosting experience so much that he decided to become a BSCO board member.

Shortly after, Royer and his wife visited Satomi at her family's home in Izumi City as part of the BSCO adult delegation.

"About 30 minutes into our visit, a silence fell over the room," Royer said. "Satomi informed us that her grandmother had just introduced



Bloomington residents Denise and Dan Royer with exchange student Satomi Fujiwara.

us to her departed ancestors. This was a very big honor. We felt immediately accepted as valued friends."

Satomi returned to the Royer's home in 2007 for one year of English language study at the University of St. Thomas. She has since graduated college and is working for the Japanese Travel Bureau in Japan.

Royer said that he and his family will be forever grateful to BSCO for introducing them to Satomi and opening doors for a lifetime of cultural exchanges.

"The Bloomington/Izumi City Sister City partnership is so valuable for its people-to-people connections," Royer said. "The stronger the connections and the more bridges of cultural understanding that are built, the more we all benefit from really getting to know each other."

Cultural exchanges and hosting opportunities take place every year in Bloomington. For more information, call BSCO at 952-563-8713.